

Gifts of the Gateway Voyage

By Kathy Bennett

There is a law of the universe which states, "You always get what you truly desire." Think about it for a moment. You can probably recall a time in your life when events fell into place; when you received something you really wanted. It may have been a better job, a new relationship, or a great vacation. It may have simply been a solution to a troubling problem. I recently desired a stronger sense of direction; a clearer understanding of where I was going in this world. What I received, and am still receiving, are the gifts of the Gateway Voyage experience.

It all started when something on top of a bookshelf caught my attention. It was a simple flyer, black ink on a pale blue page. By the time I had finished reading it my body was swirling with intense energy. The Monroe Institute and Robert Monroe, author of JOURNEYS OUT OF THE BODY and FAR JOURNEYS, had put their Gateway Voyage program on the road, it said. And get this: Gateway was coming to my neighborhood! Reading the flyer again to grasp more details, I learned that Bob Monroe has developed an audio technique called Hemi-Sync (hemispheric synchronization) that can lead an individual into various mental states. Hemi-Sync has been used to access deeper levels of awareness. The Gateway Voyage Program uses Hemi-Sync in a "series of taped exercises designed to lead participants to the thresholds of consciousness that become gateways to expanded personal power and awareness."

The idea of being led to "thresholds of consciousness"; of learning to identify various levels of awareness, sparked my interest. Seth talks about this concept in his book SETH SPEAKS. He says, "Consciousness at different levels or stages perceives different kinds of events. In order to perceive some of these you have only to learn to change the focus of your attention from one level to another. The dimensions of it (consciousness) can only be sensed by those determined enough to take the time and effort required to journey through their own subjective realities." I thought the Gateway Voyage Program would perhaps provide this kind of experience for me.

Another deciding factor in my decision to attend the program was my urgent desire to open a direct communication with my higher self. Dare I say it? I wanted to create a channel through which personal wisdom and direction would flow. Never mind that I had been thus far directed to "discover" the flyer. I wanted ego boosting drama.

The Gateway Voyage Program did provide me with experience in identifying various altered states. The Hemi-Sync signal was the key. The process uses pulses of sound to help create simultaneously an identical wave form in both brain hemispheres. It helps to focus the whole brain to the same state of awareness. The technology cuts a pathway to consciousness which took me to an altered state and kept me there.

The taped exercises provided a slow progression of skill building. Using the tapes I learned how to relax deeply; I stretched my conscious awareness to pull in more of the unknown into the known; I practiced with other methods of communication to contact energy systems; and I established body signals to determine my own level of consciousness. Seth says minute chemical and electrochemical alterations accompany stages of consciousness. Certain physical changes in hormone production and pineal activity do occur. I used this to create reference points for further explorations.

The most precious gift of Gateway was found in the dynamics of the group. Initially I was wrapped up in my own personal quest of self discovery and it didn't occur to me that others may join me on my journey. As it was, twelve unique individuals created the Gateway experience. We developed a group energy so powerful that a magical thing happened; we became mirrors to one another. Each person reflected an aspect of myself. It was as if I had divided into twelve pieces with each piece experiencing its own personal growth; each piece empathized with and loved dearly by me. The magic worked the other way to, as I also reflected aspects for the others. A tremendous love/energy filled our beings. It sought expression through joyous playfulness, wild insights, intense dreams and outrageously funny jokes (wink, wink).

Another lovely gift that came via the Gateway's format was the week long residential program, which provided me with an opportunity to get away from the outside world. There were no phones, no T.V.s or radios, no time pieces and no workday responsibilities. Our morning wake up call came shortly before the birds got up. Some of us gathered for exercise; others joined the group at breakfast. Afterward, we all gathered at the recreation room and began discussion. This was followed by taped exercises, more discussion, food and play. Then came more tapes, discussions and so on into the night (long after the birds had gone to sleep).

It didn't take long before our group began to feel the odd effects of this routine. We began sensing subtle shifts in the way we perceived sensory information. For instance, Alex, a fellow explorer, discovered he could not grasp the contents of a paragraph he had just read. I found myself lulled into daydreams by simply focusing on the sound of running water. None of us could keep track of time. More notably, none of us really cared to try. One of our trainers, Dan Clausing, had an explanation for our shift in perception. Because of the concentration used during the taped exercises we had strongly activated the right hemisphere of our brains. Humans possess a double brain with two ways of knowing. The right and left hemisphere gathers the same sensory information and each half handles the information in different ways. The mode of the left hemisphere is sequential, verbal, objective and analytical. The mode of the right hemisphere is subjective, intuitive, relational, holistic and time free. Our western culture spends a great deal of time in a left hemisphere mode. That's how things get done in order and on time. When there is a shift over to right hemisphere dominance, we open ourselves to receiving intuitions and wonderful insights. I very much enjoyed spending the week being "right brained."

Says Gateway trainer, Ann Martin, "When you

make a request (from the higher energy) and you don't get what you expect, be aware. Gifts don't always come in the wrappings we anticipate." I should have heeded that advice sooner. I wasted a lot of time chasing after my higher energy, deeply desiring an open channel to my greater self. I looked in all the corners of my mind. I even delivered myself to the doorsteps of the mansion of my oversoul; no one was home. I looked so hard I couldn't see a damn thing. But, when I finally understood what Ann meant, new ways of perceiving opened up for me. I remembered that I was working with energy. Communication manifests as impressions, emotions, body sensations and verbal language. We had to remain open to our own way of channeling energy. As it turned out, my most insightful and dramatic realizations came to me by way of my dreams.

The most enduring gift I received from my Gateway experience was an affirmation of my ability to direct myself. I now have a clearer understanding that I do indeed create my reality; that I am responsible for my growth. I can now draw myself into a higher energy and channel my own wisdoms and direction. Gateway has given me the incentive and the cosmic tools with which to accomplish this. I am on a new path to greater awareness and many more exciting adventures lie ahead of me.

